

Message Text

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64

ACTION FBO-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 (ISO) W

----- 040525

R 301006Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 463

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSP, ABLD, OGEN, UR, US

SUBJECT: KIEV PROPERTIES

REF (A) MOSCOW 16534, (B) MOSCOW 17050

1. BEGIN SUMMARY - WITH THE COMPLETION OF THE BASIC RECONSTRUCTION AND RECONFIGURATION WORK AT THE APARTMENTS AT 9 FLORENTSIYA STREET, KIEV (REFTEL B), THE REMAINING PROBLEMS CONCERN THE FINISHING WORK AT THOSE APARTMENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE EMBASSY HAS NOT YET RECEIVED AN ANSWER TO ITS LETTER OF OCTOBER 20 (REFTEL) CONCERNING ITS DIFFICULTIES WITH KIEV AUTHORITIES

IN RESOLVING THE QUESTION OF WHO DOES THE FINAL FINISHING WORK AT THE FLORENTSIYA STREET APARTMENTS. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THERE ARE TWO BASIC CONSIDERATIONS. ONE IS PRINCIPLE, THAT IS WE SEE NO REASON TO GIVE UP A RIGHT IN KIEV WHICH WE ALWAYS HAD IN MOSCOW. INDEED THE IMPLICATIONS OF ACCEPTING THE KIEV AUTHORITIES' POSITION THAT ONLY SOVIET WORKERS CAN BE USED ON CONSTRUCTION WORK WOULD CREATE A VERY UNDESIRABLE PRECEDENT FOR THE MUCH LARGER PROJECTS AT GORKY AND STRELETSKAYA STREETS.

3. THE OTHER BASIC CONSIDERATION IS THE SIGNIFICANT PRACTICAL PROBLEMS INVOLVED. FOR EXAMPLE, THE KITCHEN CABINETS, CLOSETS, STOVE HOOD VENTILATION, ETC. HAVE BEEN PURCHASED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM. ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND LAYOUT DIRECTIONS ARE IN ENGLISH AND IN THE ENGLISH MEASURING SYSTEM, I.E., FEET AND INCHES. EVEN WITH AMERICAN SUPERVISION THE EMBASSY FREQUENTLY ENCOUNTERS

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DIFFICULTIES WITH ITS LOCAL EMPLOYEES INSTALLING US APPLIANCES

IN MOSCOW. WE RECENTLY DISCOVERED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT LOCAL EMPLOYEES THREW AWAY ONE OF THE TWO GAS PRESSURE REGULATING DEVICES UPON THE INSTALLATION OF NEW STOVES. THE RESULT HAS BEEN SUBSTANTIAL MAINTENANCE PROBLEMS. WITH INEXPERIENCES, UNSUPERVISED UPKK EMPLOYEES THE SITUATION WOULD BE COMPOUNDED. ANOTHER PRACTICAL PROBLEM IS THE SOVIETS LACK OF EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES TO LAY WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING WHICH HAS BEEN SPECIFIED FOR THE APARTMENTS AT FLORENTSIYA. EVEN IN MOSCOW, UNDER AMERICAN SUPERVISION, THE LAYING OF WALL-TO-WALL CARPETING PROPERLY HAS PROVED TO BE A DIFFICULT AND CONTINUING PROBLEM.

4. THE EMBASSY'S CONTRACT SPECIALISTS PLAN TO GO TO KIEV DURING THE FOURTH WEEK OF NOVEMBER. WE HAD HOPED THAT WORK COULD BEGIN TWO WEEKS EARLIER BUT DIFFICULTIES WITH SOVIET VISAS, THE KIEV AUTHORITIES' POSITION AND THE URGENT NEED TO FINISH SEVERAL APARTMENTS IN MOSCOW HAVE HELD BACK THEIR SCHEDULED DEPARTURE FOR KIEV. ASSUMING NO MORE DELAYS, WE EXPECT AT LEAST TWO AND POSSIBLY ALL THREE OF THE FLORENTSIYA APARTMENTS TO BE READY FOR OCCUPANCY BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

5. AT THE MOMENT THE SITUATION IS AS FOLLOWS. KIEV AUTHORITIES WISH THE EMBASSY TO SIGN A FORMAL LEASE ON THE THREE FLORENTSIYA APARTMENTS. UNTIL NOW WE HAVE HAD AN INFORMAL MONTH-TO-MONTH ARRANGEMENT (THE ORDINARY PROCEDURE HERE) DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION AND RECONFIGURATION PHASE. THE EMBASSY AND THE ADVANCE PARTY HAVE INFORMED THE SOVIETS WE WILL NOT SIGN A FORMAL LEASE WHICH INCLUDES PROVISIONS THAT PROHIBIT THE EMBASSY'S EMPLOYEES AND/OR ITS CONTRACTORS FROM CARRYING OUT FINISHING OR REDECORATING WORK. THE KIEV ADVANCE PARTY HAS INFORMED THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES THERE THAT THE EMBASSY HAS TAKEN UP THIS QUESTION OFFICIALLY WITH THE MFA (REFTEL A) AND THERE THE MATTER RESTS FOR THE MOMENT.

6. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE AT AN APPROPRIATE TIME WITH THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, BY STRESSING THAT WE REGARD THE KIEV AUTHORITIES' POSITION AS UNTENABLE AND CONTRARY TO THE NORMAL AND CURRENT SOVIET PRACTICE AND BY EMPHASIZING THAT IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF SIGNIFICANT DELAYS WERE TO RESULT FROM THE UNCOOPERATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE KIEV AUTHORITIES ON THIS MATTER.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 OCT 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW17077
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760406-0042
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976102/aaaaabag.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION FBO
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 MOSCOW 16534, 76 MOSCOW 17050
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: KIEV PROPERTIES
TAGS: AFSP, ABLD, OGEN, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006